



The English of Kosrae

Sara Lynch

English Department

University of Bern

Switzerland



Aims of the project

- Examine:

- The presence, uses and structure of English in Kosrae
- Extra-linguistic factors which have shaped the current variety of English
- The use of English in this community in light of Schneider's (2007) 'Dynamic Model'
- Salient linguistic characteristics of Kosraean English

Putting Kosrae on the map



Kosrae overview

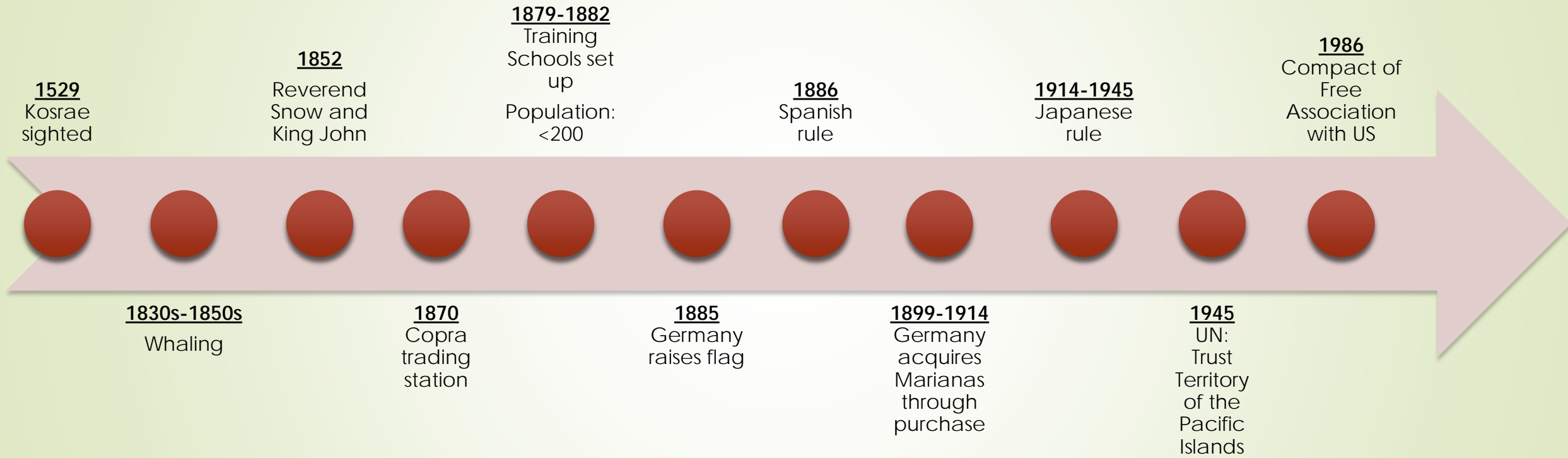


- Population: approx. 6,616
- Size: 111.3 km²
- Government: Federated States of Micronesia (1986)
- Religion: Christian
- Economy: Compact of Free Association
- Migration: Inter-FSM, Kosrae→US





History timeline



1529

Kosrae sighted



1852

Reverend
Snow and
King John

1879-1882

Training
Schools set
up
Population:
<200

1886

Spanish
rule

1914-1945

Japanese
rule

1986

Compact of
Free
Association
with US

1830s-1850s

Whaling

1870

Copra
trading
station

1885

Germany
raises flag

1899-1914

Germany
acquires
Marianas
through
purchase

1945

UN:
Trust
Territory
of the
Pacific
Islands

1529
Kosrae
sighted

1852
Reverend
Snow and
King John

1879-1882
Training
Schools set
up
Population:
<200

1886
Spanish
rule

1914-1945
Japanese
rule

1986
Compact of
Free
Association
with US

1830s-1850s
Whalers

1870
Copra
trading
station

1885
Germany
raises flag

1899-1914
Germany
acquires
Marianas
through
purchase

1945
UN:
Trust
Territory
of the
Pacific
Islands



1852

Reverend Snow



1529
Kosrae
sighted

1879-1882
Training
Schools set
up
Population:
<200

1886
Spanish
rule

1914-1945
Japanese
rule

1986
Compact of
Free
Association
with US

1830s-1850s
Whaling

1870
Copra
trading
station

1885
Germany
raises flag

1899-1914
Germany
acquires
Marianas
through
purchase

1945
UN:
Trust
Territory
of the
Pacific
Islands

1529
Kosrae
sighted

1852
Reverend
Snow and
King John

1879-1882
Training
Schools set
up
Population:
<200

1886
Spanish
rule

1914-1945
Japanese
rule

1986
Compact of
Free
Association
with US

1830s-1850s
Whaling

1870
Copra trading



1885
Germany
raises flag

1899-1914
Germany
acquires
Marianas
through
purchase

1945
UN:
Trust
Territory
of the
Pacific
Islands

1879-1882 Training

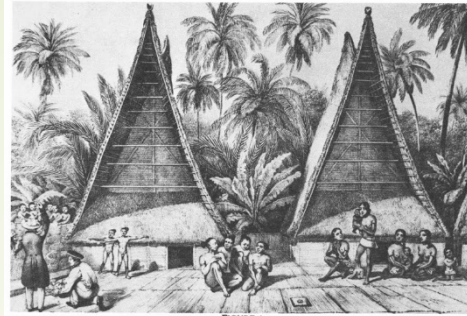


FIGURE 4
Illustration of High Chief Siba's Dwelling Compound by the Larke Expedition. The houses are private houses in the back of the compound. (Lutke 1835, Atlas: Plate 18).

1529
Kosrae sighted

1852
Reverend Snow and King John

1886
Spanish rule

1914-1945
Japanese rule

1986
Compact of Free Association with US

1830s-1850s
Whaling

1870
Copra trading station

1885
Germany raises flag

1899-1914
Germany acquires Marianas through purchase

1945
UN: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

1529
Kosrae
sighted

1852
Reverend
Snow and
King John

1879-1882
Training
Schools set
up
Population:
<200

1886
Spanish
rule

1914-1945
Japanese
rule

1986
Compact of
Free
Association
with US

1830s-1850s
Whaling

1870
Copra
trading
station

1885
Germany raises flag



1899-1914
Germany
acquires
Marianas
through
purchase

1945
UN:
Trust
Territory
of the
Pacific
Islands

1886

Spain official rule



1529
Kosrae
sighted

1852
Reverend
Snow and
King John

1879-1882
Training
Schools set
up
Population:
<200

1914-1945
Japanese
rule

1986
Compact of
Free
Association
with US

1830s-1850s
Whaling

1870
Copra
trading
station

1885
Germany
raises flag

1899-1914
Germany
acquires
Marianas
through
purchase

1945
UN:
Trust
Territory
of the
Pacific
Islands

1529
Kosrae
sighted

1852
Reverend
Snow and
King John

1879-1882
Training
Schools set
up
Population:
<200

1886
Spanish
rule

1914-1945
Japanese
rule

1986
Compact of
Free
Association
with US

1830s-1850s
Whaling

1870
Copra
trading
station

1885
Germany
raises flag

1899-1914
Germany
purchases Marianas

1945
UN:
Trust
Territory
of the
Pacific
Islands



1914-1945 Japanese rule



1529
Kosrae
sighted

1852
Reverend
Snow and
King John

1879-1882
Training
Schools set
up
Population:
<200

1886
Spanish
rule

1986
Compact of
Free
Association
with US

1830s-1850s
Whaling

1870
Copra
trading
station

1885
Germany
raises flag

1899-1914
Germany
acquires
Marianas
through
purchase

1945
UN:
Trust
Territory
of the
Pacific
Islands

1529
Kosrae
sighted

1852
Reverend
Snow and
King John

1879-1882
Training
Schools set
up
Population:
<200

1886
Spanish
rule

1914-1945
Japanese
rule

1986
Compact of
Free
Association
with US

1830s-1850s
Whaling

1870
Copra
trading
station

1885
Germany
raises flag

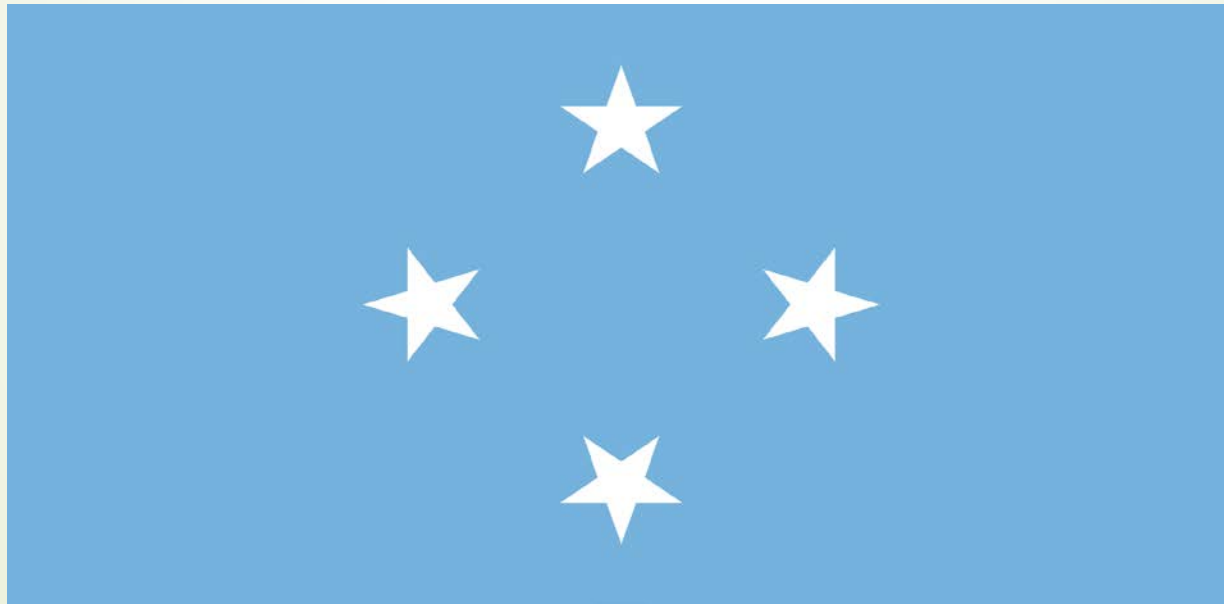
1899-1914
Germany
acquires
Marianas
through
purchase

1945
Trust Territory of the Pacific



1979

Federated States of Micronesia



1986

Compact of Free Association



1529
Kosrae
sighted

1852
Reverend
Snow and
King John

1879-1882
Training
Schools set
up
Population:
<200

1886
Spanish
rule

1914-1945
Japanese
rule

1830s-1850s
Whaling

1870
Copra
trading
station

1885
Germany
raises flag

1899-1914
Germany
acquires
Marianas
through
purchase

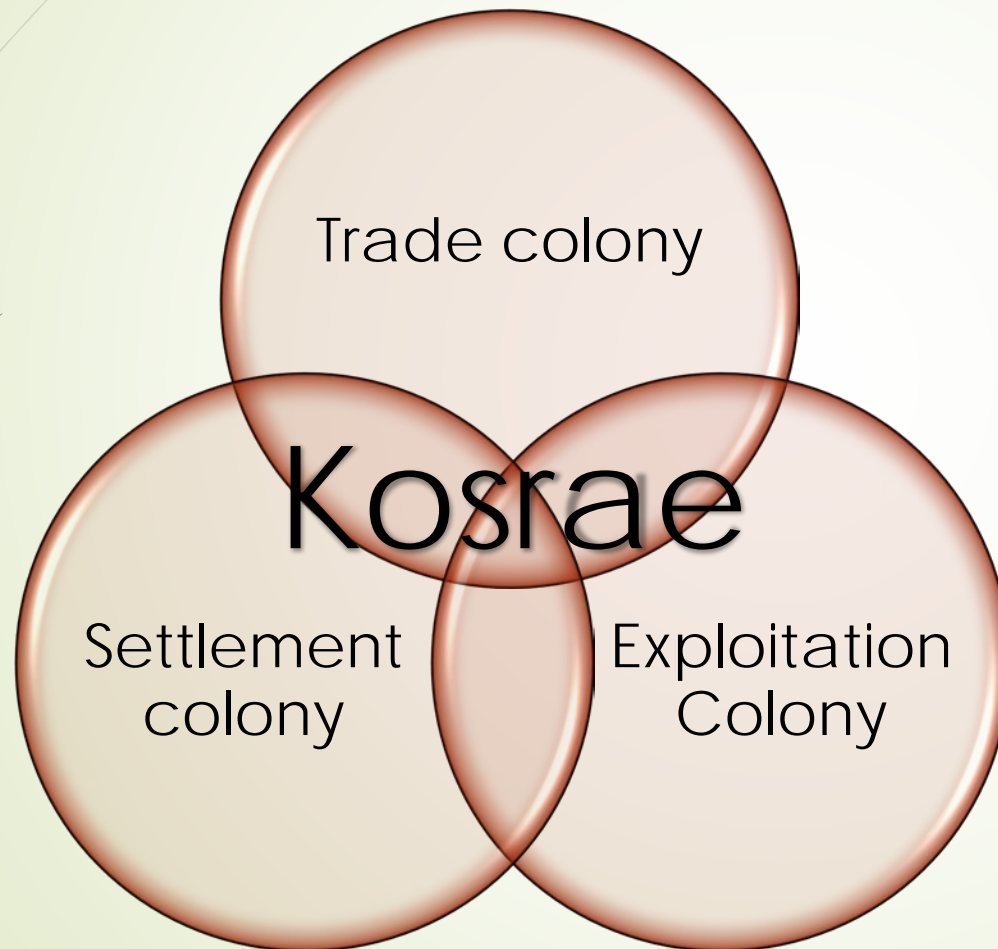
1945
UN:
Trust
Territory
of the
Pacific
Islands

Methodology

- 90 speakers
- 45 minute interviews

Age	Sex	Occupation	Education	Time spent off-island
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <20• 21-35• 36-50• >50	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Men• Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publically employed• Privately employed• Self employed• Unemployed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High School• College Of Micronesia, FSM• Micronesian College• US University/ College	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Within FSM• Within Micronesia• Hawaii• US Mainland• Military• Work• Education

Kosrae as a post-colonial island



Cultural development-
Westernization, Americanization,
McDonaldization

Mufwene (2001)


Schneider's (2007) Dynamic Model





Phase 1: Foundation Phase

- 1830s: Whalers and missionaries
- STL: temporary residence
- IDG: only rightful residence
- Exclusively utilitarian contact
- Koineization, incipient pidginization and toponymic borrowings



Phase 2: Exonormative Stabilization Phase

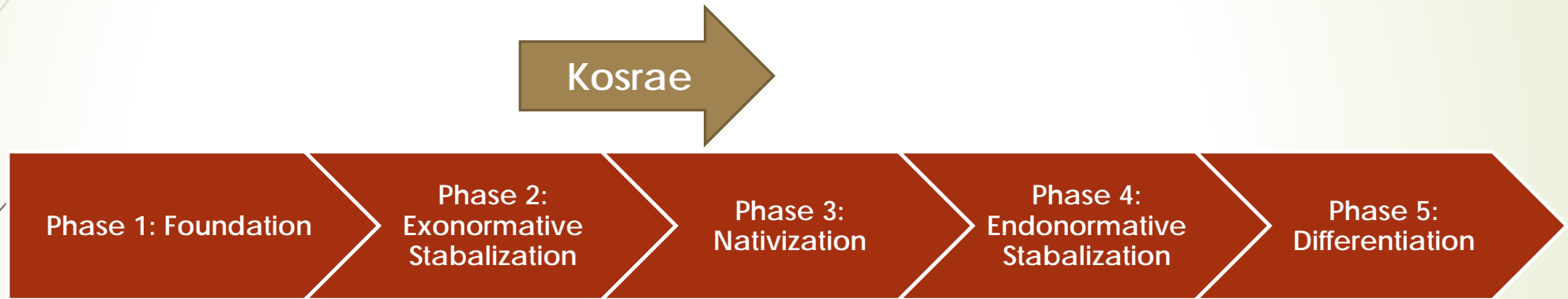
- Political stabilization
- English regularly spoken in a new environment
- Language of administration, education, legal system and national government
- English has become the language of economic possibilities and advancement: pride?
- Largely lexical change but also syntactic and morphological



Phase 3: Nativisation

- Becoming less dependant on (USA) in terms of political, linguistic and cultural guidance
- Clashes politically (cessation of Compact 2023) – citizenship
- Identity construction; semi-autonomous, STLs are more ingrained in the community
- Acculturation through media, music, etc. is occurring
- Innovative patterns and rules are emerging
- Mutual accommodation: affirmative response to a negative question

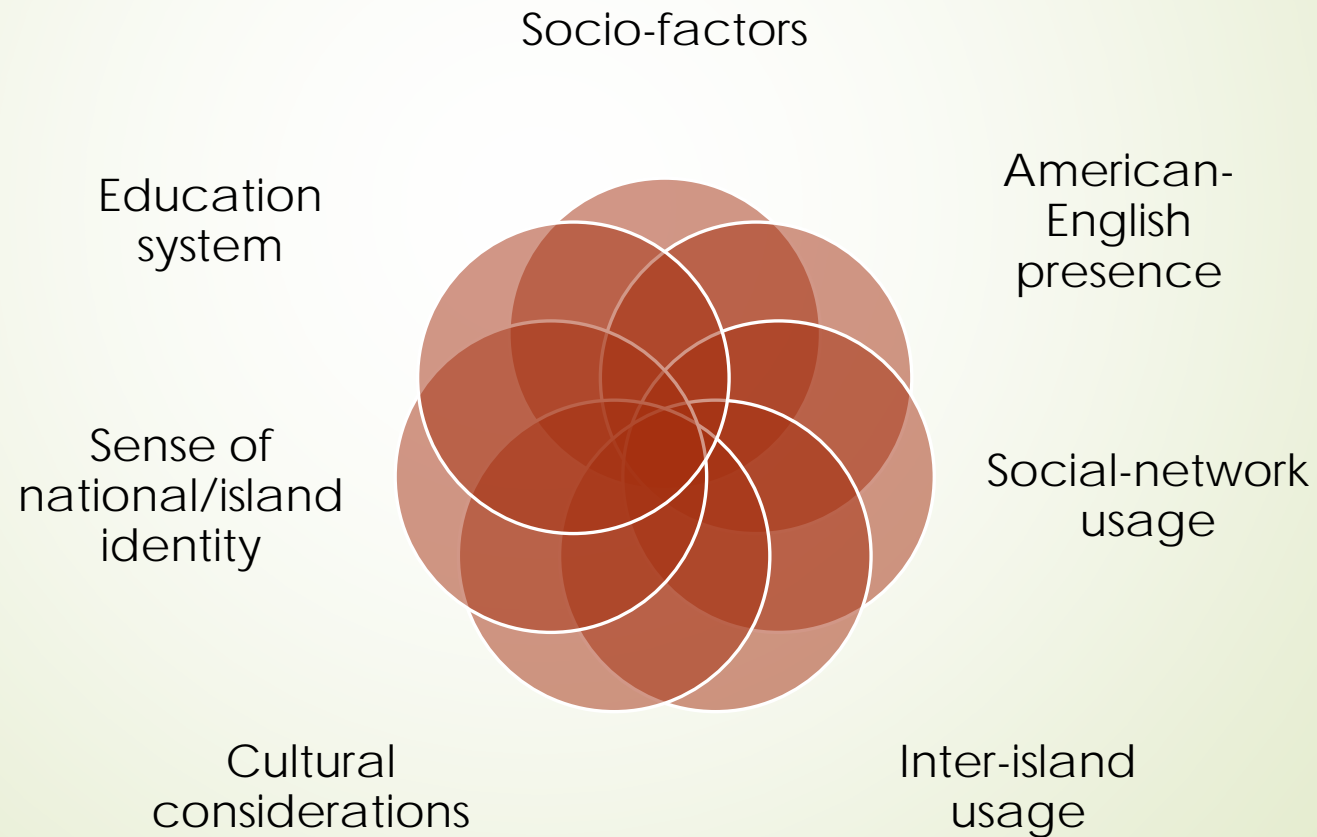
Schneider's (2007) Dynamic Model



Intra-linguistic factors which may affect Kosraean-English

- ▶ Kosraean language
 - ▶ consonants [p] [t] [k] [f] [m] [n] [ŋ] [l] [r] [s] [ʃ]
 - ▶ Vowels: [i] [e] [ɛ] [a] [ə] [y] [u] [o] [æ] [ʌ] [ɪ]
 - ▶ Voiced labial-velar approximant [w]
 - ▶ SVO
 - ▶ Order of noun: noun-adj, noun-demonstrative, noun-numeral, noun-rel. clause
 - ▶ Overt article which appears to function as a definite article
 - ▶ Possessive suffixes
 - ▶ Highly polysemic language e.g. *wan*
 - ▶ Many words are borrowed from English and Japanese
 - ▶ Reduplication e.g. [fatfat]

Extra-linguistic factors which may affect Kosraean-English



Variation of grammatical features

- 3rd person 0
 - *Susan cook very good food, she make very good cake also*
- Nouns preceded by determiners or semantically plural quantifiers that are semantically plural, the noun often lacks (essentially redundant) plural marking:
 - *Not all the woman know how to make fava*
- Pro-dropping
 - *Should be like that...*
- Gonna for conditional
 - *And he's gonna also mention the name of that lady y'know (hypothetical situation)*
- Zero past tense forms of regular verbs
 - *I start to learn before I come*
- Plural variation
 - *When he used to make canoe*

Variation of phonological features

- /h/ insertion and /h/ deletion (word initial) e.g. *oven* [hɒvən]
- /b/ → [p] e.g. *build* [pɪld]
- Word initial voiced TH realised as stop e.g. *this* [dɪs]
- Post alveolar fricative sometimes realised as alveolar e.g. *fish* [fɪs]
- Word-final velar nasal /ŋ/ maybe produced as /n/ e.g. *cruising* [kru:zən]
- Stress on final syllable e.g. *application* [ˌæplɪkeɪʃən]
- Merger of KIT and FLEECE vowel /ɪ/ → /i:/ e.g. *fish* [fɪs]
- Raising of the vowel /a/ to sound like /ɛ/ e.g. *pat* [bed]
- Monophthongization of FACE diphthong e.g. *tasty* [testɪ]



Conclusion



US education as a factor

/h/ insertion and deletion

Examine further the relationship between their feelings toward the US and bilingualism

What will happen after 2023?



References



- Schneider, E. W. (2007). *Postcolonial English: Varieties around the world*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Schneider, E. W. (2011). *English Around the World. An Introduction*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Burridge, K., & Kortmann, B. (Eds.). (2008). *Varieties of English: The Pacific and Australasia*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Segal, H. G. (1989). *Kosrae: The Sleeping Lady Awakens*. Kosrae: Kosrae Tourist Division, Department of Conservation and Development.
- Wilson, W. S. *Outline of Kosraen (sic) History* <http://www.comfsm.fm/~dleeling/kosrae/history.html> College of Micronesia (28/09/2015)
- Britain, D., & Matsumoto, K. (2014). Palauan English. In J. Williams, E. Schneider, P. Trudgill & D. Schreier(Eds.), *Further studies in the lesser known varieties of English* (305-343). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.